

Orange Room First Grade Curriculum

Building a sense of community in which each child recognizes and realizes the importance of compassion, communication, respect, cooperation, and problem solving is central to the Orange Room class structure. The children have a variety of opportunities to direct their learning based on their natural curiosity and interests. The Orange Room curriculum incorporates the four core content areas: Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. Artistic expression using a variety of media is integrated into the four core content areas. Children are encouraged to become "experts" and teach each other and other classes the thematic concepts covered in class. Diverse approaches are used in the presentation of content in order to incorporate different learning styles. Activities are hands-on and experiential when possible. Developing a positive learning environment that supports and encourages a love of learning is an important goal in the Orange Room.

Calendar

After Math each day, the Orange Roomers go over the calendar, count the days of school, observe and identify the weather, and go over the schedule for the day. Many calendar concepts are covered using both the English and Spanish languages. Children count in Spanish to find out what day it is. The date (day of the week, number, and month) is repeated in both languages. The children identify the weather in both English and Spanish. The calendar activities incorporate the following concepts: number recognition; writing the date; and recognizing and predicting patterns. Counting the days of school helps children become familiar with the concept of place value.

Morning Question

The Morning Question provides the children with the opportunity to express and articulate their feelings, ideas, and experiences in a non-threatening environment. Most Morning Questions relate to the theme and encourage discussion to enrich the children's understanding of thematic concepts.

Literacy concepts are also introduced and reinforced during Morning Question.

Math

The Orange Room primarily utilizes the Eureka Math curriculum. This curriculum focuses on building strong fact fluency and critical thinking skills. The following is a list of the math concepts and skills that will be covered during the year in the First Grade Eureka Math curriculum:

- Establish Math routines
- Use tools for Mathematics
- Represent and solve problems involving addition and subtraction within 20
- Add and subtract fluently to 10
- Add and subtract within 20
- Understand and apply the properties of operations and the relationship between addition and subtraction
- Understand Place Value using Base Ten
- Use place value understanding and properties of operations to add and subtract
- Measure lengths indirectly and by iterating length units
- Represent and interpret data
- Extend the counting sequence
- Tell and write time to the hour and half hour
- Identify and count pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters
- Reason with shapes and their attributes
- Identify, compose, and partition shapes

Literacy Curriculum

The Orange Room Literacy Curriculum combines structured literacy and reading comprehension components to strengthen and build literacy skills.

A. Theme Book

Each week a different theme book, based on the weekly theme, is used to reinforce social studies and science concepts as well as reading comprehension skills. The teacher reads the theme book the first three

days of the week. Mini lessons, following or preceding the reading, incorporate the following concepts:

- Identifying the main idea of the story
- Making predictions before and during the reading
- Retelling story events using the structure of beginning, middle, and end
- Summarizing orally what was read
- Recognizing the difference between fiction and non-fiction texts
- Identifying and describing the setting of the story
- Answering who, what, when, where, why, and how questions
- Creating a timeline of events

After listening to the theme book, the children may illustrate and practice reading their own "Little Book." This book is either a scaled down version of the theme book or the same text as the theme book. The children read and draw their own illustrations to match the text on each page. The purpose of the "Little Book" is to effectively combine the use of decoding strategies and reading comprehension skills to build confidence in reading as well as build fluency.

On the fourth day of each week, the children take turns retelling the story. This provides the teacher with an assessment of the children's reading comprehension skills and understanding of story development.

On the fifth day of each week, the children choose parts and act out the story. This approach allows children to "jump into the book" and develop an appreciation and love of literature.

B. Literacy

A structured literacy approach to instruction is utilized during Literacy.

1. Mini lessons

Each mini lesson explicitly covers structured literacy concepts using the following resources: Secret Stories, Heart Words, Decodable Passages, Vowel Sound Wall, Daily Language and Grammar Review, and Picture of the Day.

Children are encouraged to approach reading by utilizing **Secret Stories** clues to decode and read unfamiliar words. Many Secret Stories clues are introduced during Morning Question. The story behind each clue is shared with the students and they may reference the clues as needed by looking at the clues posted in the classroom. Students identify previously covered Secret Stories in the Morning Question each day and take turns reading the questions. During the second half of the year, the teacher includes spelling, grammatical, and punctuation errors in the Morning Question. The students identify and correct the errors.

Heart Word instruction and practice are based on the understanding that some high frequency words cannot be decoded, but the spelling of part(s) of these words needs to be memorized "by heart." Heart Words are posted in the classroom for students to reference as needed. After a Heart Word is covered in class, a pink heart is placed next to it. Students are expected to spell all Heart Words with pink hearts correctly.

Decodable Passages are used in conjunction with S.P.I.R.E. and the Vowel Sound Wall to reinforce and practice decoding skills as well as build fluency and reading comprehension.

Vowel Sound Wall lessons focus on articulating vowel sounds, understanding how our mouths make the sounds, and identifying vowel graphemes. Vowel Sound Wall practice is explicit and systematic. Decodable Passages are used to practice and reinforce Vowel Sound Wall concepts.

Daily Language and Grammar Review (DLGR) practice introduces, reviews and reinforces literacy concepts.

Picture of the Day helps students observe and identify details and learn how to make inferences and draw conclusions based on their observations. Students study a photograph and make a list of the details they observe in the photo. Using the details, as well as their personal experiences, students make inferences and draw conclusions about what is happening in the photograph.

They justify their inferences and conclusions in writing and orally with the class.

2. **Reading groups-** the children read books at their reading level aloud and respond to reading comprehension questions with the teacher in small groups.
3. **Journal writing-** Students express their ideas in writing and meet individually with the teacher to read and edit their writing. Students are encouraged to complete journal entries independently. Children are expected and encouraged to spell unfamiliar words using their understanding of Secret Stories clues and spelling patterns covered in mini lessons, concepts covered in the S.P.I.R.E., and invented spelling (spelling phonetically).
4. **Reading Response-** the children choose a book at their reading level to read independently. The children are encouraged to use the "Five Finger Rule" when choosing a book. If they cannot read more than five words on the first page, they are encouraged to choose different books that better fit their current reading levels. As the year progresses, children are asked to respond to reading comprehension questions in writing or complete Reading Response projects after reading books independently. The Reading Response projects are designed to reinforce and assess children's reading comprehension skills.
5. **S.P.I.R.E. (Specialized Program Individualizing Reading Excellence)**

The teacher guides students in S.P.I.R.E. groups through specifically sequenced lesson plans designed to provide direct, explicit, and systematic instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The students meet twice a week to work through a lesson plan that focuses on a specific concept. They complete a sound, word, and dictation assessment each week. Students are given reading and spelling practice to work on at home to complement the practice completed in class.

6. Handwriting

The children receive specific handwriting instruction using Handwriting Without Tears. Children practice writing upper and lower-case letters appropriately. Handwriting practice is also incorporated into Literacy.

7. Read Aloud

Two days a week the teacher reads to the children from a chapter book. Children are encouraged to relax, listen, reflect, and create illustrations in their minds.

First Grade Literacy Objectives:

- Apply knowledge of how print is organized and read
- Identify isolated words and sentences in text
- Identify and employ strategies to decode unfamiliar words
- Use phonetic strategies to self-correct reading errors when possible
- Recognize, read, and spell high frequency words
- Accurately read common, irregularly spelled words
- Use beginning and ending consonants to decode one-syllable words
- Use two-letter consonant blends and digraphs to decode unfamiliar words
- Use word patterns to decode unfamiliar words
- Use end punctuation to guide oral reading
- Use context to assist in meaning-making
- Self-check for meaning during reading
- Read leveled text with fluency and comprehension
- Answer who, what, when, where, and why questions after reading independently
- Recognize and decode compound words
- Use appropriate spacing of words and sentences
- Write legibly in manuscript on all assignments
- Generate pre-writing idea or plan
- Focus on one idea or topic when writing independently
- Capitalize the beginning of each sentence

- Capitalize proper nouns
- Use invented spelling and phonics to spell independently
- Use knowledge of beginning and end consonant sounds to spell unfamiliar words
- Use vowels (a,e,i,o,u and sometimes y) in each word when writing
- Recognize long and short vowel sounds when reading
- Recognize long and short vowel sounds when writing
- Represent each syllable of a word when writing independently
- Use complete sentence structure (subject and predicate)
- Punctuate using basic end punctuation (period, question mark, and exclamation point)
- Alphabetize words to the second letter
- Use descriptive vocabulary in writing

Theme Activities

The themes for the year are based on the children's interests and the Virginia Standards of Learning for Social Studies and Science for First Grade. The themes vary in length. Some themes may be covered in one week and others may be covered in three weeks. The length of the themes may be extended based on the children's curiosity and enthusiasm for the subject matter. During Theme activities, the class engages in discussions, conducts experiments, and participates in hands-on, theme-related activities.

This year the following themes will be covered in the Orange Room:

August	Back to School Free to Be You and Me (Celebrating Individuality)
September	Communities Maps and Mapmaking
October	Seasonal Changes (Fall/Harvest) Appalachia (biology)
November	Appalachia (geology)

December	Indigenous People of Virginia Indigenous People of North America
January	Space Polar Regions
February	Water/Matter Leaders in American History
March	Machines and Motion Exploring the Ocean
April	Exploring the Ocean What We Buy-Our Economy Changemakers in Virginia History Plants
May	Rain Forest Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Star-of-the-Week

For the first half of the school year, each child has the opportunity to be the Star-of-the-Week. The Star-of-the-Week may share something about themselves twice (2 days-15 minutes each day) during their week. This exercise helps children gain valuable experience speaking in front of a group. The class community has an opportunity to gain an appreciation of and celebrate the individuality and uniqueness of each child.

Resident Expert

During the second half of the year, each child has the opportunity to be a Resident Expert. Each child chooses a Social Studies or Science subject they are interested in learning more about (preferably a subject that will not be covered in the Orange Room Themes). With family support, the child conducts an in-depth study of the subject and prepares two 15-minute presentations and/or activities related to their chosen subject. The child becomes the "expert" and teaches the class about their chosen topic.

Coyote Connections

Coyote Connections is a nature-based education program that provides students the time and space to *See, Think, and Wonder* about the natural world by nurturing their ability to:

- Be still and quiet
- Pay attention using all their senses
- Question
- Follow their own curiosities
- Make connections and build relationships
- Manage unstructured time
- Practice gratitude

While the scaffolding for Coyote Connections has been thoughtfully crafted from the mentor's personal nature expertise with support from the text, Coyote's Guide to Connecting with Nature, this is a student-focused, student-driven program. Student observations and curiosities about the natural world will help guide where we go throughout the academic year as we experience the changes of the seasons together.

Gathering Routine-We will meet every other Monday with our partner class (Orange+Turquoise). Each student will be paired with someone from the other class for the entire school year. We usually start our time together in the Forest Classroom. When we gather, we will begin with a short, guided meditation to check in with our bodies, see how we are feeling, and decide what things from the day we would like to keep and what things we would like to release. We may hear a story or poem or brainstorm some ideas together. Then, we will go out onto the playground where each pair of students will have a special Sit Spot they have chosen and will keep for the rest of the year. A Sit Spot is a special place in nature where students become comfortable just being there, still and quiet. Sit Spots provide students an opportunity to get to know one place really well. While in their Sit Spots, students will pay attention to what is going on around and within them. They will always have the option of quietly journaling during this time and may at times be working with their partner on a prompt or using field guides to study their surroundings. We will usually close each session in the Forest

Classroom, where students will have the opportunity to share their Sit Spot experiences, listening to and learning from each other.

Additional Subjects

Orange Roomers will receive regular instruction in Art, Physical Education, Spanish, and Music. Teachers specializing in these subjects provide the curriculum and instruction.

Assessment

Assessment in the Orange Room is both formal and informal. Formal assessments are used to assess progress in Reading, Math, and Spelling. The Houghton Mifflin Leveled Reading Assessment and the DORA (Diagnostic Online Reading Assessment) are used to assess each student's progress with phonemic awareness, word recognition, spelling, oral vocabulary, and reading comprehension at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. S.P.I.R.E. assessments assess their knowledge of phonological concepts. Students complete Words Their Way spelling inventories at the beginning, middle, and end of the year to provide additional data related to spelling progress. The assessments used in Math are provided by both the teacher and the Eureka Math curriculum. Informal assessments include teacher observations and anecdotal records as well as the assessment of skills and participation in small and large group discussions and activities. Assessment of Science and Social Studies concepts is gauged through project work and participation in class discussions and activities. Parent-teacher conferences are held three times during the school year to discuss the children's progress. A formal written evaluation is prepared at the end of the year and is reviewed in the final parent-teacher conference.